DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 024 035 AL 001 585

By- Gardner, R.C.

Attitudes and Motivation: Their Role in Second-Language Acquisition.

Teachers of English to Speakers of other Languages.
Pub Date Sep 68
Note- 10p.; Paper presented at the TESOL Convention, March 1968
Available from- TESOL, Institute of Languages and Linguistics, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. 20007 ($1.50).
Journal Cit- TESOL Quarterly; v2 n3 Sep 1968
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.60
Descriptors- American Indians, *Attitudes, Childhood Attitudes, Cultural Differences, Cultural Factors, Culture Conflict, *English (Second Language), French, Interference (Language Learning), Language Role, *Learning Motivation, Parent Attitudes, *Second Language Learning, Teacher Attitudes

The author reviews some of the research which he has conducted on the role of the parent in the language-learning situation. While most of this research has not dealt with English as a second language, it is suggested that the observed phenomenon is as relevant to the ESL program as to any other second-language situation. The author summarizes his views as follows: (1) Attitudinal motivational characteristics of the student are important in the acquisition of a second language. (2) The nature of these characteristics suggests that the truly successful student (i.e., the one who will acquire communicational facility with the language) is motivated to become integrated with the other language community. (3) This integrative motive appears to derive from the attitudinal characteristics in the home and must be fostered by an accepting attitude, by the parents, concerning the other language group. (4) The process of second-language acquisition involves the child both in taking on behavioral characteristics of the other language community, and in experiencing resistance from himself and pressures from his own cultural community. (Author/AMM)

ED 024035

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEAL... EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY James E. Alatis

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER"

*Attitudes and Motivation: Their Role in Second-Language Acquisition**

R. C. Gardner

My intent in this paper is to review some of the research we have conducted which indicates just how dynamic and potent the role of the parent might be in the language-learning situation. I should say at the outset that most of our research has not dealt with ESL programs, but that nonetheless the phenomenon we have observed would seem as relevant to the ESL program as to any other second-language situation.

I think it is meaningful to distinguish two roles of the parent which are relevant to his child's success in a second-language program. For want of better labels, I'm going to refer to them as the *active* and *passive* roles, even though these labels are not completely descriptive. By the *active role*, I mean that role whereby the parent actively and consciously encourages the student to learn the language. In the active role, the parent monitors the child's language-learning performance, and to the extent that he plays this role he attempts to promote success. That is, the parent watches over the child and makes sure he does his homework, encourages him to do well, and in general reinforces his successes. I believe it is safe to assume that differences in the extent to which parents vary in this encouragement function would have some influence on the child's performance in any learning situation.

The other type of role, the *passive role*, is more subtle, and I think more important, primarily because the parent would probably be unaware of it. By the subtle role, I mean the attitudes of the parent toward the community whose language the child is learning. These attitudes are important, I believe, because they influence the child's attitudes, and it is my thesis (and I'll try to convince you of its validity) that the child's attitudes toward the other language community are influential in motivating him to acquire the second language.

To contrast these roles, let me suggest one possible example. An English-speaking parent might actively encourage a child to learn French. He may stress the importance of doing well in that course, and might see that the child does his homework, and so forth. To himself, and to any observer, he might be perceived as actually helping the child. This is the active role. This same parent might hold positive or negative attitudes toward the French community. To the extent that he holds negative attitudes, he may be undermining his active role, by transferring to the child negative

---

* This paper was presented at the TESOL Convention, March 1968.

Mr. Gardner, Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Western Ontario who will be on leave of absence for the 1968–69 academic year to Philippine Normal College, is the author of numerous articles on language learning in the *International Journal of American Linguistics*, the *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, and the *Canadian Journal of Psychology*.

AL 001 585

REFERENCES

Carroll, J. B. and S. M. Sapon. *Modern Language Aptitude Test* (MLAT). New York: Psychological Corporation, 1959.

Feenstra, H. J. *Aptitude, Attitude and Motivation in Second Language Acquisition.* Diss., University of Western Ontario, 1967.

Gardner, R. C. *Motivational Variables in Second-Language Acquisition.* Diss McGill University, 1960.

Gardner, R. C. "Motivational Variables in Second-Language Learning." *International Journal of American Linguistics,* 32 (1966), 24–44.

Gardner, R. C. *A Survey of Attitudes of Educators of American Indian Children.* Research Bulletin No. 66. University of Western Ontario, 1968.

Gardner, R. C. and W. E. Lambert. "Motivational Variables in Second-Language Acquisition." *Canadian Journal of Psychology,* 13 (1959), 266–272.

Lambert, W. E., R. C. Gardner, R. Olton, and K. Tunstall. *A Study of the Roles of Attitudes and Motivation in Second-Language Learning.* Mimeo., McGill University, 1960.

Lambert, W. E. and O. Klineberg. *Children's Views of Foreign Peoples.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967.

attitudes about the French community, and thus reducing the child's motivation to learn the language. This is the passive role. By his own attitudes the parent may develop in the child doubts concerning the real need for the language (particularly in the case where the parent does not speak that language). If the child fails an exam in French, he might anticipate some anger from his parent (who after all, is encouraging him to succeed), but he can always salve his own conscience by rationalizing that it it not really necessary to learn the language, as is evidenced by the fact that his parent gets along well enough without it. A negative attitude in the home can support this rationalization, and thus possibly defeat the active role. Although my example is with reference to an English-speaking child involved in learning French, I think the same description might be applicable to the Puerto Rican child in New York, or the Navajo child in Arizona, who is attempting to learn English.

I have emphasized the role of attitudes in second language acquisition because we have conducted a number of studies (Feenstra, 1967; Gardner, 1960; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Lambert, Gardner, Olton & Tunstall, 1960; also see Gardner, 1968) which have demonstrated that the student's attitudes are related to second-language achievement. Rather than describe each study, let me outline the general approach in all of them. The design of a typical study involves testing a large group of students who are studying French as a second language. Measures are obtained on each student's language aptitude (Carroll and Sapon, 1959), his attitudes toward the French-speaking community and outgroups in general his reason (orientation) for studying French, the degree of effort expended in learning French, and finally his skill in various aspects of French achievement. Generally, there are a total of thirty to forty measures obtained on each child. The relationships among these measures are investigated by means of a statistical procedure known as factor analysis. This technique allows one to mathematically investigate the inter-relations (given in terms of correlation coefficients) of all the measures to determine which of the measures form separate clusters (i.e., factors). If, for example, the language aptitude measures and the measures of French achievement were positively associated in the same cluster, this would indicate that students who have language aptitude do better on measures of French achievement than do students with less language aptitude. On the basis of such a relationship one might assume that achievement in French is dependent upon an aptitude for languages.

The actual results of these studies indicated that in fact language aptitude is related to French achievement, and moreover that a complex of attitudinal-motivational variables are also related to French achievement. That is, two major clusters are generally obtained, one a language aptitude—French achievement cluster, and the other an attitudinal motivational—French achievement cluster. These two clusters, or factors, are independent of each other, and furthermore they seem to involve different aspects of second-language skills which are stressed in the school-room situation, while

the attitudinal motivational cluster tends to involve those second-language skills which would be developed outside the classroom in interaction with the other language community. In summary, it appears that differences in language aptitude result in differences in the extent to which the student can acquire second-language skills dependent upon active instruction, whereas motivational differences influence the extent to which the student acquires skills which can be used in communicational situations.

This generalization is based on results of studies conducted in Montreal and London, Canada, as well as in Maine, Louisiana, and Connecticut. In each of these areas the results clearly indicate that a particular pattern of attitudinal-motivational components facilitated second-language acquisition. Students who emphasized that learning the second language would permit them to interact with the French-speaking community, tended to have positive attitudes toward the French, or a favorable orientation toward outgroups in general. Furthermore, they were more motivated to learn French in that they worked harder. Such students were more successful in acquiring French. Because the major characteristic of this configuration appeared to describe an interest in acquiring French for purposes of integrating with the French-speaking community, we referred to this configuration as an integrative motive.

The concept of the integrative motive implies that successful second-language acquisition depends upon a willingness (or desire) to be like valued members of the "other" language community. The acquisition of a new language involves more than just the acquisition of a new set of verbal habits. The language student must adopt various features of behaviour which characterize another linguistic community. The new words, grammatical rules, pronunciations, and sounds, have a meaning over and above that which the teacher is trying to present. They are representations of another cultural group—and as such the student's orientation toward that group should be expected to influence the extent to which the student can incorporate these verbal habits. Whereas the ability-oriented psychologist stresses the fact that second-language learning involves the acquisition of new verbal habits, and hence prior verbal skills will facilitate their acquisition, the orientation emphasized here is that these new verbal habits also are representations of another linguistic group and that suitable social attitudes will also facilitate their acquisition.

Although the integrative motive appears to promote the successful acquisition of a second language, there remains the question of how the integrative motive develops. In their cross cultural study of children's views of foreign peoples, Lambert and Klineberg (1967) demonstrated in a number of different countries that the child's parents play a major role in the development of attitudes about other ethnic groups. Research in our own laboratory similarly demonstrates that children's attitudes toward both English and French Canadians are highly related to the attitudes of their parents, and it seems reasonable to assume that the child reflects the attitudinal atmosphere of his home.

In two of the studies on the motivational variables underlying second-language achievement, we had the opportunity to obtain information from the parents. In one of the Montreal studies (Gardner, 1960) we interviewed the students' parents and compared the responses of parents of children who were integratively oriented with those of children who were instrumentally oriented. The results demonstrated that in contrast to the students who professed an instrumental orientation, integratively-oriented students tended to come from homes where the parents also professed an integrative orientation and where the parents had definite pro-French attitudes. (In short, the students were apparently reflecting the parents' attitudes in their choice of orientations.) Interestingly, however, there did not appear to be any relation between the student's orientation and the number of French friends the parents had or the degree of French proficiency that the parents expressed. Parents of the integratively-oriented students did, however, think that their children had more French-speaking friends than did the parents of instrumentally-oriented students. Whether this was a statement of fact (i.e., that the integratively-oriented students did have more French-speaking friends) could not be ascertained from the data gathered. It is equally possible that because of their own favorable attitudes towards the French-Canadian community, the parents of the integratively-oriented students were willing to ascribe a number of French friends to their children, while parents of the instrumentally-oriented students with their comparatively unfavorable attitudes would not admit that their children associated with many French-Canadian children.

These relationships between the parents' attitudes and the students' orientations suggest that the student's orientation grows out of a family-wide orientation and consequently that to some extent the degree of skill which the student attains in a second language will be dependent upon the attitudinal atmosphere in the home concerning the other linguistic group. Thus it is possible that parents who have favorable attitudes towards the French community and who feel that learning the language is valuable because it allows one to learn more about the group and meet more of its members actually encourage their children to study French, whereas the parents with the unfavorable attitudes and the instrumental orientation do not effect the same degree of encouragement.

In a more recent study, Feenstra (1967) systematically investigated the role of parental attitudes, by including ten measures obtained from the parents, in the factor analysis. Thus rather than determining how a few parental attitudes related to the child's orientation, he was able to study how parental attitudes clustered with respect to the children's language aptitude, motivation, and French achievement. Of major concern to this discussion were his findings that parents who emphasized the integrative orientation and who held positive attitudes toward French Canadians, encouraged their children to study French and actually had children who were skilled in some aspects of French achievement. In short, he found evidence that there is an association between what I have termed

here the *active* and *passive* roles of the parent, and that these roles are related to French achievement. Furthermore, he also found that parents who were favorably oriented toward outgroups in general appeared to transmit this orientation to their children, and that this attitudinal disposition was also related to French achievement. Both of these findings support the conclusion that the child's integrative attitudinal orientation is fostered in the home, and that this accepting home environment has a direct association with second-language achievement.

In summary, all of our findings to date support the conclusion that second-language achievement is facilitated by an integrative motive, and that the development of such a motive is dependent upon a particular attitudinal atmosphere in the home.

The studies that we have conducted were concerned with English-speaking children learning French as a second language. At one time I thought that because of this, our data might not be relevant to the sort of situation with which TESOL is concerned. Recently, however, I was involved in a research project with the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington which was concerned with the American Indian child learning English as a second language. I believe now that the relationships that we have obtained for the acquisition of French as a second language would probably also be obtained in that situation. Rather than emphasizing the language which is being acquired, I think it might be more meaningful to emphasize the usefulness of the language which is being acquired. Rather than isolating studies which are concerned with the acquisition of French or English or German, I think it may be more useful to look at the potential usefulness of the second language. Our studies on the acquisition of French as a second language have been conducted in a number of different geographical settings. In some of these French could be classified as a "high use" language. One can and does live in this environment and functions extremely well by using French alone. In other words, French is a highly active language in that community, and proficiency in the language permits one to communicate in a situation where otherwise he couldn't. This contrasts with other geographical areas in which we have worked where French is a "low use" language. That is, an individual may be able to use the language in some communicational situations, but by and large he could communicate reasonably well without it. I think I should add that differentiating between high use and low use languages assumes that there are some other avenues available to the communicator, so that whereas Montreal would be classified as a geographical setting in which French is a "high use" language, the individual can, nonetheless, make use of English as an alternative if he so desires. A geographical setting like Hartford, Connecticut, might be classified as a "low use" area or at least lower than Montreal. It is probably true that in Hartford, one could make use of French if one desired, but it is not as important for communication and the individual can function almost completely in English. It seems to me that in many areas where ESL programs would be offered, English is probably

a "high use" language but that the child has other avenues that he can use. The Navajo living in a border town, can undoubtedly make good use of English, or alternatively, he could if necessary use the other avenue of limiting most of his communications to his native language and possibly learning only a very limited amount of English for highly specific purposes. From the point of view of the student, this situation appears to be highly analagous to that of the English-speaking individual living in Montreal.

We recently obtained some data suggesting that the foregoing analysis is relevant to students learning English as a second language (Gardner, 1968). These data were obtained from 300 educators of Indian children in the U.S.A., and although the children themselves were not tested, the reactions of the teachers suggest that attitudinal variables are operative in this group. One analysis involved teachers' views of Indian students, non-Indian students, and Indian adults. This analysis suggested that the teachers perceive the Indian student as similar to, yet different from, both the non-Indian students and Indian adults. The comparative reactions indicate that the Indian student is perceived as possessing some traits in common with elders of his own cultural group, some in common with students from the non-Indian culture, and others which are truly midway between both groups. In short, the teachers, at least, are indicating that the Indian students seem to be taking on some characteristics of the non-Indian community. These, of course, are reactions of the teachers, and consequently it might be argued that there is little reason to assume that the Indian student is in fact integrating with the non-Indian community. However, further analyses of these reactions indicate that the teachers of the older students perceive Indian students more similarly to the non-Indian student community. That is, with increased age and contact with the educational system, it might be hypothesized that the Indian children appear to be becoming more like the non-Indian community. At least, these appear to be the feelings of the teachers involved.

The graphs presented in Figures 1–3 similarly indicate the role that social factors play in motivating children to learn a second language. These data are also based on the attitudes of the teachers of American Indian children. These three graphs illustrate the mean attitude scores for different teachers in different grades. Each graph consists of four points, the mean for teachers of grades 1–2, the mean for teachers of grades 3–4, for 5–7, and for 8–12. Each mean is based on the attitude test scores of approximately sixty teachers. Figure 1 demonstrates that the teachers of grades 1–2 feel that Indian students are more motivated to learn English than do teachers of grades 3–4, and that these teachers rate their students as more motivated than do teachers of grades 5–7. Teachers of grades 8–12, on the other hand, indicate that there is an increase in motivation for their students. There are, of course, many ways in which these results can be interpreted, but one parsimonious interpretation is that these attitudes of the teachers reflect the motivational characteristics of the students in their classes. This interpretation would suggest that there is a decrease in

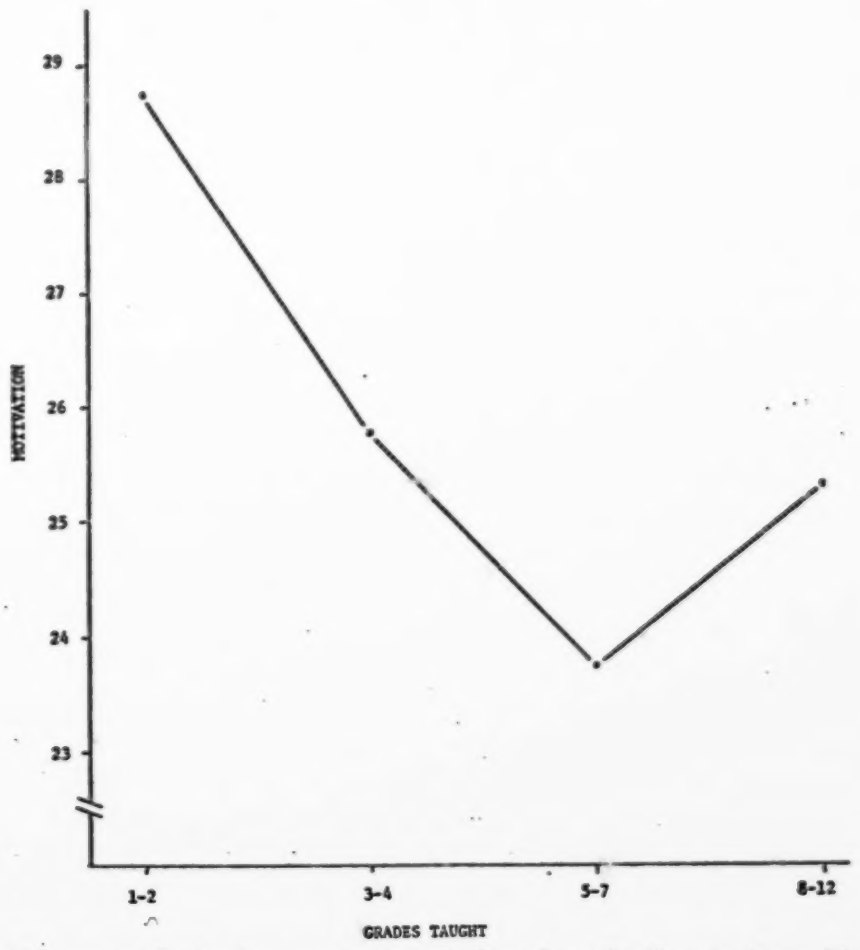

FIG. 1. Educators' attitudes concerning students' motivation to learn English as a function of grade taught

motivation to learn English to grade 7, and from there on the motivation tends to increase. You can almost see this as indicating the inquisitive exuberance of the young child, the gradual apathy of the older child in an educational atmosphere that may not appear meaningful to him, and then the awakening of the possible importance of the program to the maturing individual.

Figure 2 is also based on the teachers' attitudes, but this illustrates their attitudes about the amount of pressure from the peer groups to avoid the use of English. Applying the same logic to these data suggests that the younger child experiences relatively little pressure from his peer group to avoid using English, but that this increases to a peak at grades 5–7, and then falls off slightly. The pattern parallels that for the measure of motivation and suggests possibly that from grades 1–7 there is a decline in motivation to learn English and that consequently children pressure others to avoid using English which in turn decreases the motivation to learn English. After grade 7, with the development of an appreciation of the usefulness of English, the pressure from the group appears to fall off.

Figure 3 suggests another social component which might serve to influence the students' motivation to learn English. Items making up this

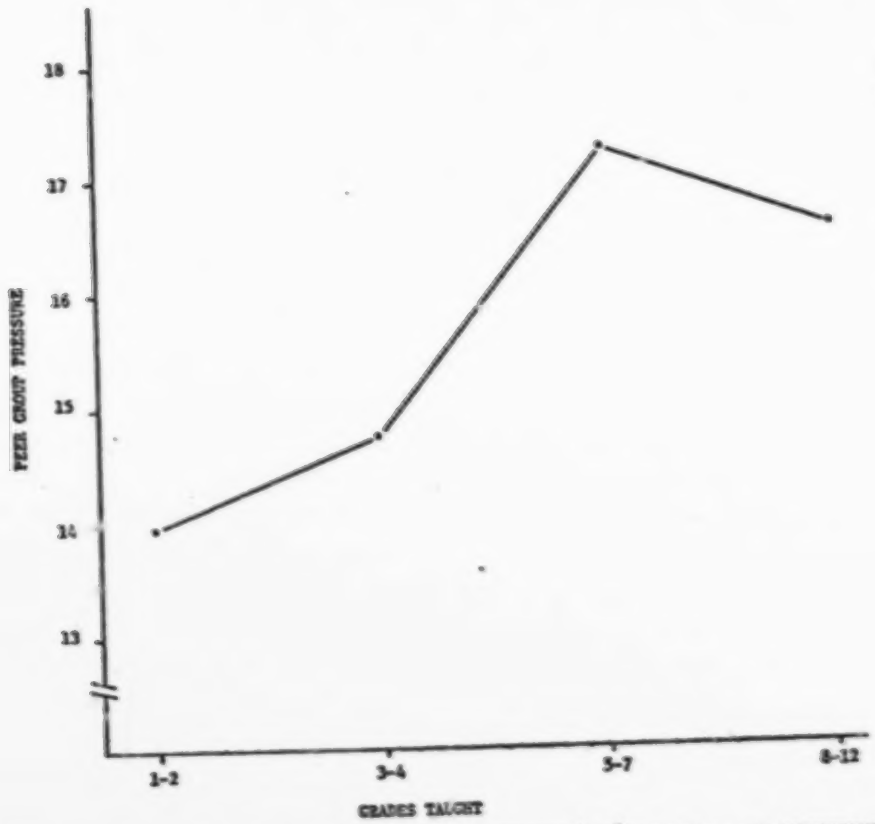

FIG. 2. Educators' attitudes concerning the amount of peer group pressure to avoid using English as a function of grade taught

scale were concerned with assessing the extent to which the Indian culture provided barriers which make it difficult for the Indian student to learn English. As before, these results suggest that teachers of the younger children perceive fewer barriers than teachers of children in grades 5–7, and that teachers of grades 8–12 see less of a cultural barrier. It might be argued that children in grades 1–2 are too young to be much influenced by inhibitions of the Indian culture, and that students in grades 8–12, to the extent that they are still in school, have become somewhat integrated with the non-Indian culture and are thus not as influenced by the Indian culture. The children from grades 3–7, however, are often still in the home and possibly are the ones experiencing conflict between the two cultures. It is significant, I believe that these three graphs evidence similar patterns. Decreases in motivation are mirrored by increases in the pressure from the group to avoid using English and by the apparent presence of cultural barriers which inhibit English language acquisition.

The results presented in Figures 1–3 represent significant variability in the means as a function of the grade the teacher taught. That these effects are possibly real rather than due to artifacts is suggested by the fact that other attitude measures did not show any effect due to grade. For example, the teachers also completed a questionnaire concerned with their attitudes about Indian students' ability to learn English, and there were no differ-

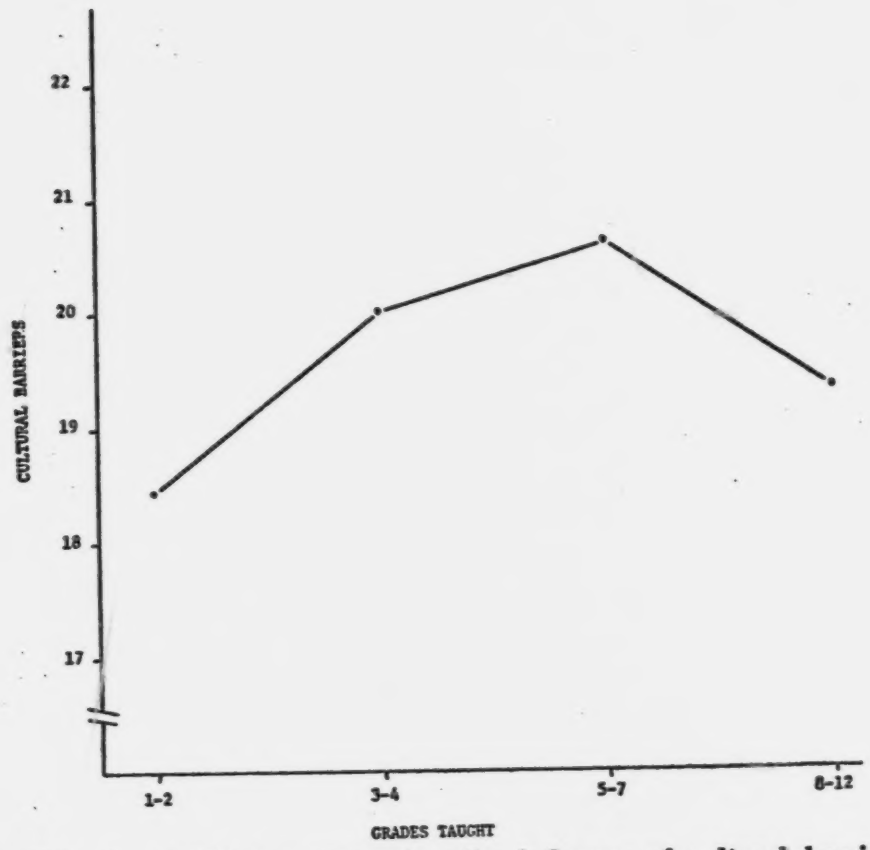

FIG. 3. Educators' attitudes concerning the influence of cultural barriers in impeding English acquisition as a function of grade taught

ences on this questionnaire due to grade. If these results were due to the fact that teachers from grades 3–7 were dissatisfied with the level of English achievement of their students, it seems possible that they would have expressed concern about their students' ability to learn English. This result was not obtained, however. The teachers of the various grades seem to be experiencing different motivational qualities in their students which seem to reflect social factors operating passively but significantly on the students.

To summarize then, I'd like to review the major points raised. First, it seems clear that attitudinal motivational characteristics of the student are important in the acquisition of a second language. Secondly, the nature of these characteristics suggests that the truly successful student (i.e., the one who will acquire communicational facility with the language) is motivated to become integrated with the other language community. Thirdly, this integrative motive appears to derive from the attitudinal characteristics in the home and must be fostered by an accepting attitude, by the parents, concerning the other language group. And finally, the process of second-language acquisition involves taking on behavioral characteristics of the other language community and the fact that the child will experience resistance from himself and pressures from his own cultural community.